

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Karen P. Hewitt***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - August 14, 2008

United States Attorney Karen P. Hewitt announced today that United States District Court Judge Dana M. Sabraw sentenced defendant Juvenal Vega-Soto to a term of life in prison. Vega-Soto, a member of the violent Hispanic gang known as the Mexican Mafia, or “La Eme,” was extradited from Mexico to the United States to face the charge in this case. Vega-Soto was convicted of participating in a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine following a jury trial on April 4, 2008.

Seven other members and associates of the Mexican Mafia were similarly sentenced to life terms of imprisonment by Judge Sabraw on March 20, 2008, based on their convictions for participating in a federal racketeering conspiracy.

United States Attorney Hewitt said, “The Mexican Mafia is a criminal organization that has operated for years in Southern California and has been a poison to our community. The members and associates of the Mexican Mafia have committed countless crimes of violence and have engaged in widespread illegal drug

activities. The sentence of life imprisonment imposed on Mexican Mafia member Juvenal Vega-Soto appropriately reflected the seriousness of his conduct.”

U.S. Attorney Hewitt praised the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force ("OCDETF") for the coordinated team effort in this case. The OCDETF program was created to consolidate and utilize all law enforcement resources in this country's battle against major drug trafficking.

DEFENDANT

Case Number: 06cr1242-DMS

Juvenal Vega-Soto

SUMMARY OF CHARGE

Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846 and 841(a)(1) - Conspiracy to Distribute Methamphetamine

INVESTIGATING AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
San Diego Police Department
San Diego Sheriff's Office
North County Regional Gang Task Force
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Carlsbad Police Department
Escondido Police Department
U.S. Bureau of Prisons
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
Naval Criminal Investigative Service
Oceanside Police Department
Drug Enforcement Administration - Los Angeles and Riverside
Bureau of Narcotics Enforcement - Los Angeles and Riverside
U.S. Marshals Service
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives